SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION
BULLETIN

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"YOUNG WOMAN," *by Helen Phillips*
Awarded Museum Purchase Prize, 56th Annual, San Francisco Art Association,
now showing San Francisco Museum of Art.

The Retribution of the Seven-Headed Cobra

By Junius Cravens

In ancient days, when the gods of Indus still strode the heavens, the earth and the seas, the Khmers, who dwelt in the jungles of Kambuja, built them a city of great beauty, which is still remembered as Angkor-Tom. And in the midst of that city there rested, like a rare jewel on the bosom of some fair princess, the vast, sculptured temple of Angkor-Vat.

Princess Naga, in mortal form (Esther Bruton), and King Kambu (Victor Arnautoff)

Photo courtesy S. F. Call-Bulletin.

To that temple the great gods came in the night, investing its shadows with their presence, as incense permeates the air. And to it by day went the people of Angkor-Tom, giving themselves to the worship of Brahman, in deep meditation.

But dissension and jealousy arose among the gods, which also drove their worshippers to war between themselves. So came a time when the fair stone images of Angkor-Vat lay broken in ruin upon the ground where they had stood, mute symbols that all things earthly must pass. And the green fingers of the jungle crept slowly over them, as though to hide their shame from the all-seeing eye of Brahman.

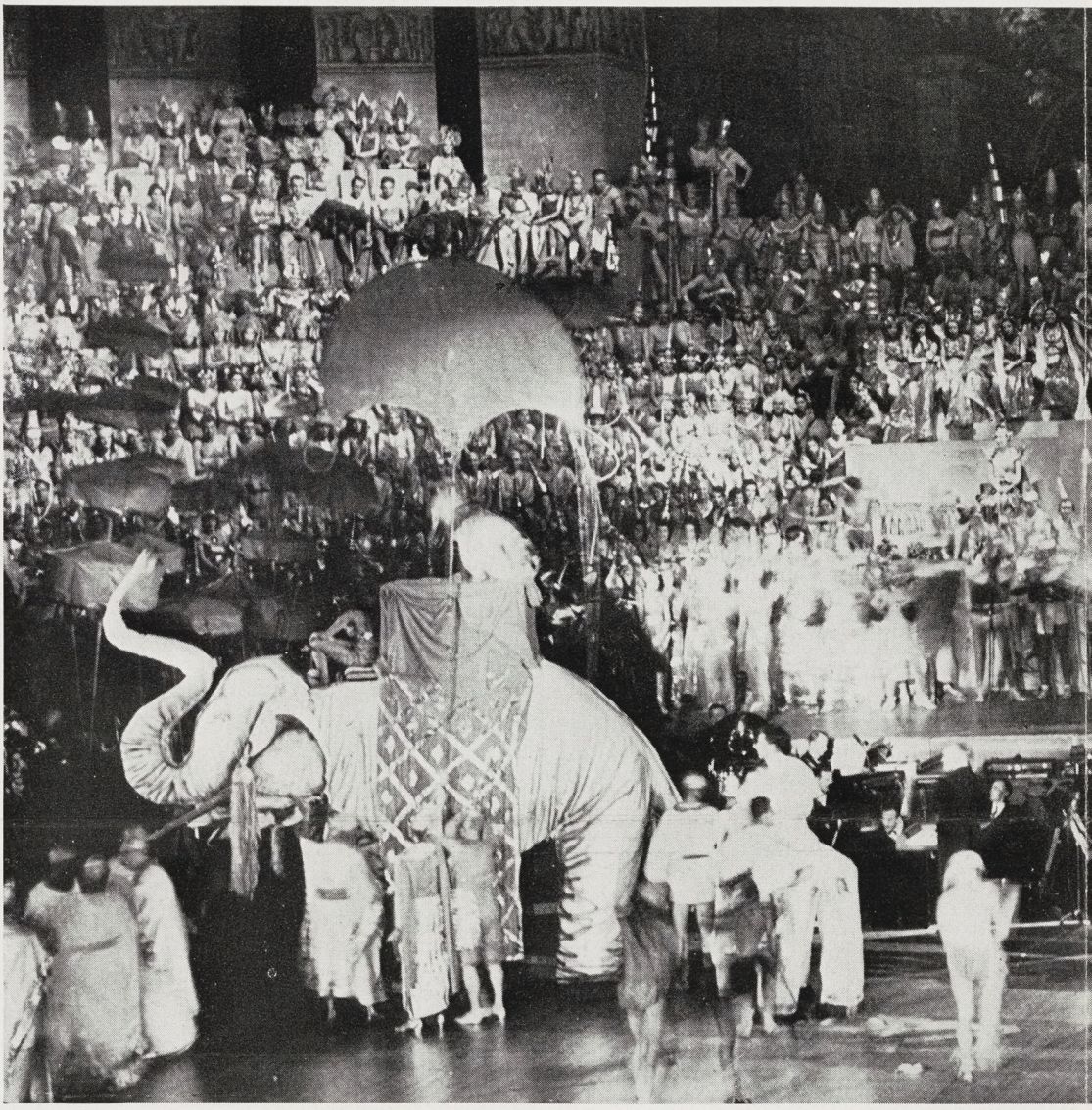
Long ages after the Khmers had perished, there stood far eastward of the China seas, in a land called California, the City of the Golden Gate. To that city came a Teller of Tales, and its people to the number of nine thousand gathered to hear his saga of the Fall of Angkor-Vat.

He told how Kambu, the mortal King of Kambuja, married the immortal goddess, Naga, whose natural form was that of the Seven-Headed Cobra; how, in order to wed him, Naga assumed mortal form; how Kambu gave oath to Naga that every prince in the land should take a bride of her choosing; how a great concourse was held at Angkor-Tom, to which, with pomp, the splendid princes came; how each in turn was betrothed to a princess, until there stood forth one who repudiated Kambu's oath and refused his proffered bride.

Then, said the Sage, the beautiful Naga, enraged, resumed her godlike form of the Seven-Headed Cobra, and Angkor-Tom and its people perished in the storm of her mighty wrath. Thus fell Angkor-Vat.

You will not find the Sage's tale among Malay legends, for it was compiled from various Cambodian myths by William H. Smith, Jr., as a vehicle for the pageant which he directed at the San Francisco Art Association's 4th Annual "Parilia," or costume ball, held in the Exposition Auditorium, San Francisco, the night of January 17. The pageant began at 11 and ended at 12:30, after which there was dancing until dawn.

It was to introduce the pageant that the Teller of Tales spoke (in the person of Edgar Walter, sculptor), and when he had done, the nine thousand spectators saw towering before them a temple-like structure of colossal proportions. It rose upwards into shadowed space in broad tiers



"SIAM" (California School of Fine Arts) pays homage to th

which were designed eventually to hold the 881 participants in the pageant. Its central feature was an enormous green Buddha, sculptured in the round. The setting was conceived by Lucien Labaudt, painter.

To give some idea of the proportions of the pageant, it were best to explain that the hall in which it was held occupies a city block. The setting, with a stage in front of it, stretched the width of one end. The pageant entered opposite the stage, and moved the length of the hall to it. As each of the 12 units of which it was composed finished its performance, the participants took assigned places on the tiers above the stage. The entire action was accompanied by an orchestra of 30 pieces.

The units are described, with an outstanding feature of each, as follows, in the order of their appearance: "The Frieze of the Lotus," Alumni Association, California School of Fine Arts, 100 participants; costumes green and silver. On a litter carried on the shoulders of 12 men, a large silver lotus flower on which sat Siva and Parvati, performing a ritualistic dance.

"Frieze of Maidens at the Fountain," California School of Design, 24 girls carrying water jars and flowers; costumes red-orange. "Frieze of the Heavenly Maidens," San Francisco Society of Women Artists, 50, many carrying tall, stylized palm trees with white stems; costumes blue-green. "Anam," Chinese Art Association, 22, yellow-orange. Group dance on floor, followed by solo sword dance on stage.

"Court of Kambu," San Francisco Art Association, 100, orange-red and gold. King Kambu (Victor Arnautoff, artist) and Princess Naga

the King and Princess. Part of Pageant, Cambodian Ball.

Photo courtesy S. F. Call-Bulletin.

(Esther Bruton, artist) entered on life-sized elephants, attended by symbol-bearers. They dismounted and ascended their throne, at the feet of the Buddha. Then a most effective Cambodian dance was performed on the main floor by a large group (Anne Mundstock, choreographer), with Marcelle Chessé and Patrick Bradfield as the principals, in silver.

"Burma," Betty Horst Dancers, 10 girls, gold and green, in a finished Burmese dance, on the stage. "Java," East Bay Artists, 35, blue; two colossal, articulated Javanese marionettes, 18 feet high, operated with sticks, and painted in blue, magenta and gold, accompanied by a devil dance, in masks. "Tonkin," San Francisco Architectural Club, 110, yellow-green; a group of effective banners, some 30 feet high; Indo-Chinese dance.

"Siam," California School of Fine Arts, first group, 150, red-orange and gold; flame dance on floor. "Ceylon," Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design, 25, red-violet. "India," George Pring dancers, 55, blue-violet; Nautch dance on stage. "Siam," California School of Fine Arts, second group, 150, orange-red, white and silver; a life-sized white elephant, followed by a baby white elephant, bearing a prince and a princess, respectively.

Lastly, Naga, the Seven-Headed Cobra, attended by 30 Indriyas in green and gold, appeared, to wreak vengeance. Her snake body, 30 feet in length, uncoiled as she approached. Angkor-Vat became enveloped in smoke, which hid its destruction from the eyes of Man.

Thus ended what was probably one of the

(Concluded on Page 5)

A Message of Thanks From the President

No one who attended the Art Association's Fourth Parilia, the recent Cambodian Ball and Pageant depicting the Fall of Angkor-Vat, can fail to feel a sense of the deepest gratitude to the thousand people who had a part in its making. All of San Francisco, in fact the entire Bay Region, is justly proud and has in no uncertain terms expressed its appreciation. To attempt to here give thanks individually would be impossible. It can only be said that it was the greatest example of cooperation on the part of our various art groups, with a common purpose in doing a fine job, having a good time and supporting an excellent enterprise—the San Francisco Museum of Art. All who contributed worked in a spirit of personal submersion, interested only in the creation and success of a great spectacle.

That the Cambodian Ball and Pageant was an unqualified success has been amply repeated by the public at large and by the Press. That your work has been appreciated by those who, through artistic training and experience are qualified to judge, is evidenced in the fact that they are enthusiastic in saying that the Fourth Parilia was unexcelled by anything of a similar nature seen by them in any part of the world. Col. W. de Basil and S. Hurok of the Monte Carlo Ballet, who were present, so expressed themselves, and Maurice Sterne, Lady Mendl (the former Elsie De Wolfe) and Prince Valdemar of Denmark, all seasoned world travelers, declared the spectacle to be unsurpassed in their experiences.

We cannot here attempt to mention names, but we must express heartfelt thanks to the leaders and all the workers who so unselfishly contributed in all departments of the affair, the following list in itself giving some idea of the vastness of this enterprise. No attempt has been made to arrange the work in the order of importance and it is hoped that there are no omissions.

Art direction and general planning of pageant; direction of production; designing, building and painting of the temple and drops for auditorium; the sculpturing of the Buddha; the selling of boxes and seats; the costume shop; donation by American Trust Co. of costume shop quarters; publicity; window displays in stores; research and advice on the design of costumes and properties; student posters; running of St. Francis office; assistance of St. Francis Hotel management; design of billboards; design of invitation; donation of billboard space; donation of streetcar advertising; cooperation of the Press; photography; lighting; men of the 30th infantry; pageant announcers; unit directors of pageant; San Francisco police department; San Francisco fire department; floor committee; music; auditorium management; the general conception and participation in the planning, designing and creation of costumes and properties and the creation of dances and rehearsing of all of the pageant groups.

You have all shown the world that the Bay Region has art groups who, in creative ability and spirit, are unexcelled. The Parilia will remain great as long as we continue to work and to play in that spirit. Congratulations!

TIMOTHY L. PFLUEGER.

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most resplendent pageants that has been staged anywhere in our time. It was so colorful in pattern, so colossal in scale, that adjectives seem inadequate in attempting to describe it. It was artistically conceived and executed, expertly directed and beautifully performed.

The fact that many who have traveled the world over and witnessed elaborate spectacles in many lands have said they have not seen its equal anywhere, merely confirms our belief that this, the 4th Annual "Parilia," was an exceptional artistic achievement.

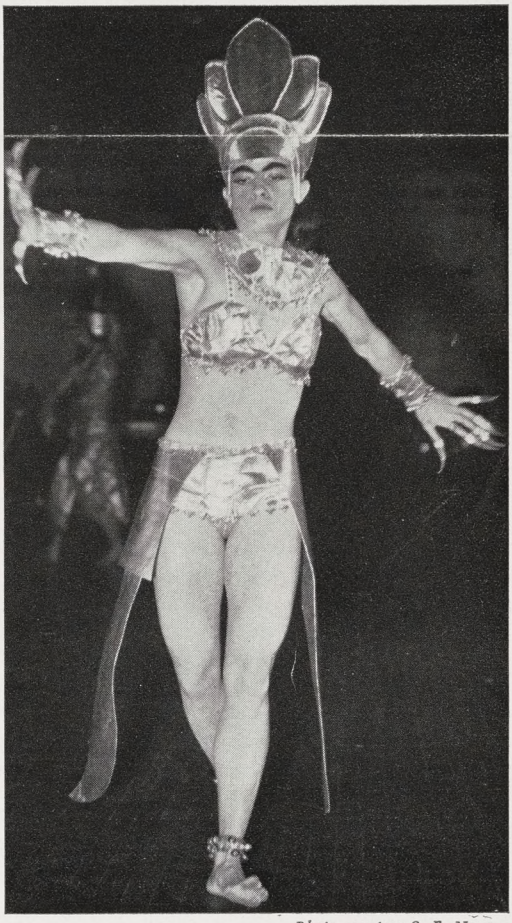

Photo courtesy S. F. News.

Marcelle Chessé as CAMBODIAN DANCER
S. F. Art Association Unit, Cambodian Ball

"STRING QUARTETTE," *by David Parks*
Awarded 2nd Anne Bremer Memorial Prize, 56th Annual, S. F. Art Association,
now showing S. F. Museum of Art.

Picture Juries and the 56th Annual

By WORTH RYDER

The jury of selection for the 56th Annual has come in for its usual yearly criticism for having rejected so many paintings. True, there were a large number of canvases to select from, but in only a very few could one see a great artistic conception vitally lived through and ably expressed in terms of the painter's craft. We did not favor any one school of painting. In spite of widely divergent esthetic creeds, this jury was singularly unanimous in its evaluations of the pictures selected and rejected. It was a unit also in the opinion that the show does not measure up to the usual standard.

Why? There was much discussion of this while the work of selection was going on and during the hanging of the exhibition. Here are some of the facts concerning the poor showing made:

1. Many of our foremost painters and sculptors sent nothing at all.

2. Some produced hurry-up compositions superficially conceived and hastily slung together for this show.

3. Others dug up any old thing from the garret in order to take advantage of the clause in the by-laws which forces the jury to accept at least one painting from an artist member of the association.

4. A great number of pictures were badly framed.

5. Pictures of social-unrest themes, some not belonging in the realm of fine art at all, pre-

sumed to get by for their illustrative factors or their violent action.

A little clear thinking and active work can easily prevent the same conditions from occurring in the future. Every artist who wants the art of California to be a living, vital force and who is eager to have San Francisco maintain its leadership in the West should belong to the Association and he should direct suggestions to the Artists' Council whereby the Annual can be always the most important exhibition in California. Here is a start:

1. Have the jury act as a committee charged with the task of canvassing the studios and making selections. (This is done in all of the big centers of Europe for the Carnegie International.) A delegation might be sent to Los Angeles for a similar purpose.

2. Delete the clause in the by-laws concerning the one-picture privilege. If this is not done, then establish a jury-free room where works rejected for the main gallery could be hung. Sell space in this same gallery to painters not yet members of the art association.

3. Place some restrictions on frames. The jury was forced to conclude that all McAllister street had been looted for this show. Why do so many of our young artists with a grand passion for the American scene think that a ruined mid-Victorian house with a false front is the only reality? Why do they inclose replicas of this house in second-hand gilt frames and send them to the tired jury? Why, also, do so many mistake a high-school romanticism about the martyred workingman with the symbols of his martyrdom for genuine esthetic experience? Most painters cease to be artists the moment they become propagandists. Gesticulations and sobs in a gilded frame are not art. Such a painter mistakes his medium; he should be soap-boxing in Union Square. A true artist is clear about his business, which is to solve certain problems of materials beautifully, and not to preach politics nor social reforms.

There are many good canvases to be seen at the annual. A painting is made to be looked at, so I shall leave it to you to discover the fine ones. Certainly one of them is the David Park. Here is a very young and sincere artist who appears to understand that painting is an art concerned with the sense of sight. Without propaganda, without flamboyant or exaggerated gestures, he presents for our refreshment a new world of visual forms, more moving, more delightful than the visual world we know. He gives us something thrilling to *look at*.

When more of our young painters cease intellectualizing, revitalize their sense of *sight*, and concern themselves with the creation of a sort of visual music, with making picture shapes that glow—then they will do much towards satisfying the genuine yearning that all men have for beauty, and they will make the Annual the distinguished exhibition we want it to be.

The 56th Annual Pre-View

The Pre-View of the Art Association's 56th Annual on the evening of January 24th was possibly the most delightful gathering held in our new galleries.

Though less elaborate than last year's preview, which marked the opening of the museum, there was a graciousness that permeated the assemblage of Art Association members and friends that augured well for future affairs.

The symphony orchestra in the central court, under the able direction of Ernest Bacon, was a fine contribution.

Perhaps the ball of the previous week still cast its spell over the guests, for, in spite of the absence of refreshments, the crowds lingered on to chat and discuss.

The 56th Annual, itself, we think a good show. Its smaller dimension is, to us, a step in the right direction. Those huge rooms of endless canvases that typified the Association's Annuals in the past always caused a sort of mental indigestion and we hope they will be permanently discontinued. They really were never assimilated and usually confused a well-disposed public.

This year's exhibition, in spite of the absence of many old contributors, is very heartening. We sympathize with Mr. Ryder's pessimism regarding it. Most artists, after the difficult and heart-breaking business of serving on a jury of selection, are left depressed. However, we feel that this jury has done a good job and this year's Annual is a representative one.

Mr. Ryder's suggestion of discontinuing the jury-free policy is almost universally considered advisable. A meeting for the purpose of thrashing out the pros and cons of this system will have to be called soon. —M. R.

Prizes, 56th Annual

Painting

First Anne Bremer Memorial Prize, $300, to "Embarcadero and Clay St.," by John Howard.

Second Anne Bremer Memorial Prize, $200, to "String Quartette," by David Parks.

First Medal of Award, "Yellow Roses," by William Gaw.

Certificate of Honorable Mention, "Market," by Hugh Littlejohn.

Sculpture

First Medal of Award, "Young Woman," by Helen Phillips.

Honorable Mention, "Head of Negro," by Carl Schmidt.

Museum Purchase Prize, $300, "Young Woman," by Helen Phillips.

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Chamber Music at Art School

A series of twelve Chamber Music Concerts, starting Thursday, February 6th, will be held at the California School of Fine Arts, and will continue for twelve consecutive Thursdays.

The concerts, which will be held in the school library at 3:45 p. m. to 4:45 p. m., are open to members and friends of the San Francisco Art Association, Alumni Association of the Art School, as well as to the students of the Art School. They are under the auspices of the Federal Music Project. There is no admission charge.

February Exhibitions

Amberg-Hirth, 165 Post Street: New jewelry by Margaret de Patta. Pottery by Glen Lukens. Bracelets by Helen Baker Reynolds.

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Lincoln Park: Showing by California artists from February 15 to March 15. Old Master paintings.

Co-operative Gallery, 166 Geary Street: Mural designs and sketches by Maynard Dixon, February 2. Group showing by unknown artists, February 4 to March 26.

Courvoisier Galleries, 480 Post Street: Miscellaneous water colors and prints.

S. and G. Gump, 246 Post Street: Sculpture and drawings by Boris Lovet-Lorski, January 20 to February 8. Prints and drawings by Mexican artists, February 10 to February 24. Water colors and drawings by John Held, Jr., February 26 to March 7.

M. H. deYoung Memorial Museum, Golden Gate Park: Wood-cuts by Hiroshige from the collection of Mr. G. P. Wynkoop. Creative art by students of the Pasadena Public Schools. Exhibition of works of students of Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design, opens February 22. Modern Architecture in California, opens February 5.

San Francisco Museum of Art, War Memorial: Fifty-sixth Annual Exhibition of the San Francisco Art Association, January 24 to March 8.

Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture of Henri Matissé—Thru February 24.

Water Colors and Drawings by Angna Enters—Thru February 15.

Paintings by Louis Eilshemius—Feb. 4 thru Feb. 28.

S. F. Museum of Art Gallery Talks

February 2—*Sunday afternoon,* 3:00 p. m.—Dr. Grace L. McCann Morley. The Art of Henri Matissé.

February 8—*Saturday afternoon,* 3:00 p. m.—Miss Caroline Berg. General tour.

February 9—*Sunday afternoon,* 3:00 p. m.—Miss Jane Berlandina. Henri Matissé.

February 12—*Wednesday evening,* 8:15 p. m.—What Is This Modernism? Mr. Hamilton Wolf.

February 16—*Sunday afternoon,* 3:00 p. m.—Dr. Grace L. McCann Morley. Matissé exhibition.

February 19—*Wednesday evening,* 8:15 p. m.—Dr. Grace L. McCann Morley. Henri Matissé and Contemporary Art.

February 22—*Saturday afternoon,* 3:00 p. m.—Mrs. Frances G. Noble. General tour.

February 23—*Sunday afternoon,* 3:00 p. m.—Miss Claudia Davis. Last lecture on Henri Matissé.

Study Course

Wednesday evenings—*Background for Contemporary Painting*—Opens February 5, at 7:00 p. m. Dr. Grace L. McCann Morley.

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